Consider what you first did sweare vnto:
To fast, to study, and to see no woman:
Flat treason gainst the kingly state of youth.
Say, Can you fast? your stomacks are too young:
And abstinence ingenders maladies.
And where that you haue vowd to studie (Lordes)
In that each of you haue forsworne his Booke.
Can you still dreame and poare and thereon looke.
For when would you my Lord, or you, or you,
Haue found the ground of Studies excellence,
Without the beautie of a womans face?
From womens eyes this doctrine I deriue,
They are the Ground, the Bookes, the Achadems,
From whence doth spring the true *Promethean* fire.
Why vniuersall plodding poysons vp
The nimble spirites in the arteries,
As motion and long during action tyres
The sinnowy vigour of the trauayler.
Now for not looking on a womans face,
You haue in that forsworne the vse of eyes:
And studie too, the causer of your vow.
For where is any Authour in the worlde,
Teaches such beautie as a womas eye:
Learning is but an adiunct to our selfe,
And where we are, our Learning likewise is.
Then when our selues we see in Ladies eyes,
With our selues.
Do we not likewise see our learning there?
O we haue made a Vow to studie, Lordes,
And in that Vow we haue forsworne our Bookes:
For when would you (my Leedge) or you, or you?
In leaden contemplation haue found out
Such fierie Numbers as the prompting eyes,
Of beauties tutors haue inritcht you with:
Other slow Artes intirely keepe the braine:
And therefore finding barraine practizers,
Scarce shew a harueſt of their heauie toyle.

But Loue first learned in a Ladies eyes,
Lines not alone emured in the brayne:
But with the motion of all elamentes,
Courses as swift as thought in euery power,
And gines to euery power a double power,
Aboue their functions and their offices.
It addes a precious seeing to the eye:
A Louers eyes will gaze an Eagle blinde.
A Louers eare will heare the lowest sound.
When the suspitious head of theft is stopt.
Loues feeling is more soft and sensible,
Then are the tender hornes of Cockled Snayles.
Loues tongue proues daintie, *Bachus* grosse in taste,
For Valoure, is not Loue a *Hercules?*
Still clyming trees in the *Hesperides.*
Subtit as *Sphinx*, as sweete and musicall,
As bright *Appolos* Lute, strung with his haire.
And when Loue speakes, the voyce of all the Goddes,
Make heauen drowsie with the harmonie.
Neuer durst Poet touch a pen to write,
Vntill his Incke were tempred with Loues sighes:
O then his lines would rauish sauage eares,
And plant in Tyrants milde humilitie.
From womens eyes this doctrine I deriue.
They sparcle still the right promethean fier,
They are the Bookes, the Artes, the Achademes,
That shew, containe, and nourish all the worlde.
Els none at all in ought proues excellent.
Then fooles you were, these women to forsweare:
Or keeping what is sworne, you will proue fooles,
For Wisedomes sake, a worde that all men loue:
Or for Loues sake, a worde that loues all men,
Or for Mens sake, the authour of these Women:
Or Womens sake, by whom we Men are Men,
Lets vs once loose our othes to finde our selues,
Or els we loose our selues, to keepe our othes:
It is Religion to be thus forsworne.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE *Love's Labour's Lost* (STC 22294) LONDON, 1598 UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH (De.3.74) Octavo